

Remarks

In the office action, the drawings were objected to for failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5). The specification was objected to for failing to provide antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter and for informalities. In addition, claim 8 was objected to for informalities. Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,174,086 to Fujikawa et al. ("Fujikawa et al.") in view of Japanese Patent Application JP 8-215551 ("JP '551"). Claims 3-11 were deemed to be drawn to allowable subject matter.

In this response, several paragraphs of the specification were amended and one new paragraph was added. Claims 1-18 remain pending in this application with claims 12-18 having been withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

A. Drawings Objections:

The drawings were objected to for failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because Figs. 3-5 include the reference character "J" not discussed in the specification. Applicants have amended paragraphs [0022] and [0023] of the specification to include a reference to the melting heat J shown in Figs. 3-5. No new matter has been entered.

Withdrawal of the objections to the drawings is respectfully requested.

B. Objections to the Specification:

The specification was objected to for failing to provide antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter and for informalities. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that limitations relating to the first second and third time periods recited in claims 5-7 are absent from the specification and that paragraphs [0024] and [0027] contain typographical errors.

Applicants have added new paragraph [0026.1] to the specification to provide antecedent basis for claims 5-7. Support for the added paragraph is found in the original specification, for example, at original claims 5-7. No new matter has been added. In addition, Applicants have

amended paragraphs [0024] and [0027] to correct the typographical errors pointed out by the examiner.

Withdrawal to the objections to the specification is respectfully withdrawn.

C. Rejections to the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103:

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,174,086 to Fujikawa et al. in view of JP '551.

Fujiwaka et al. describes a preparation a process of preparation of a capsule for use in an isostatic pressing treatment. The process includes enclosing the material to be treated with metallic foil, welding the metallic foil so as to seal the material to be treated, wherein the welding is carried out by means of TIG welding.

JP '551 describes a hydrogen separation membrane that includes a mounting frame 6 embedded into an end edge of the surface of a metallic porous body 4, in contact with a hydrogen permeable metallic foil 1 to that the surface of the frame 6 is flattened and joined to the end edge through a layer of metal including Ag, Au, Pt, and Cu.

Independent claim 1 recites a method for resistance seam welding of a foil and at least one foil support of a fuel cell system. The method includes the steps of:

- pairing the at least one foil support with the foil;
- disposing the foil and at least one foil support on a flat support element;
- welding the at least one foil support and the foil in a gas-tight manner by resistance heating using a roller electrode and an electric power supply; and
- moving the foil and the at least one foil support on the support element relative to the roller electrode during the welding.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Fujiwaka et al. and JPP '551 does not teach or suggest at least the feature of resistance seam welding at least one foil support and a foil by resistance heating using a roller electrode and an electric power supply. JP '551 does not suggest seam resistance welding at all. Fujiwaka et al., on the other hand, while disclosing resistance seam welding using rollers as one alternative, does not suggest at least the step of welding the foil and the foil support in a gas tight manner. The examiner has identified coating 15 as the foil support. However, there is no suggestion in Fujiwaka et al. for using a roller electrode to resistance weld the Fujiwaka foil 2 to the Fujiwaka foil support 15. Instead, Fujiwaka et al. merely describes using seam resistance welding to join two metallic foils 2 to

each other. See Figs. 6(1) and 6(2) and column 6, lines 14-21. Nor is there any suggestion for moving the foil and foil support on the support element during the welding.

Withdrawal of the rejections to claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.


CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments made and arguments presented, Applicants respectfully submit that the presently pending claims are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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